

State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION



NOTICE OF PREPARATION

PROJECT TITLE: Equestrian Facilities Project

**Cuyamaca Rancho State Park
San Diego, CA**

The California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR), as Lead Agency under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, is considering the preparation of an environmental document (Environmental Impact Report) for the project identified above. A brief project description and list of anticipated environmental effects to be considered in the environmental analysis are contained in this Notice of Preparation (NOP). Interested persons, organizations, and agencies are encouraged to comment on the scope and content of the information to be included and analyzed in the CEQA analysis. Agencies should comment on the elements of the environmental information that are relevant to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Please send your written response to Karen Miner, CDPR Project Manager, at the address shown below. Responses should include your name or the name of a contact person at your agency or organization, and mailing address. Please send your response at the earliest possible date, but no later than July 11, 2007.

Two previous NOPs were issued for the Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, Los Caballos Equestrian Campground Project. These NOPs addressed the replacement of Los Caballos Equestrian Campground. This NOP is for an entirely new project which will establish new equestrian facilities near the community of Descanso in the southern portion of the park including a campground, day-use amenities, and staging area. Additionally, the project proposes to construct permanent day-use equestrian staging near Paso Picacho and establish connecting trails to these facilities where needed.

For those interested, an informational public meeting, pursuant to Public Resource Code 21083.9, will be held on June 12, 2007 at Descanso Town Hall, located at 24536 Viejas Grade in Descanso. The meeting will be held in a continuous, open forum format and the public may attend anytime from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

All documents pertinent to this project are located at CDPR's Southern Service Center (see following address). The NOP and site map are available on the following websites:

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION CONTACT PERSON:

Karen Miner, Project Manager
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8885 Rio San Diego, Suite 270, San Diego, California 92108
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project would create new equestrian facilities near the community of Descanso in the southern portion of the park including a campground, day-use amenities, and staging area within Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. The proposed campground project will include approximately 20 individual campsites (including a host site), comfort station, horse corrals, round pens, arena, shade ramadas, picnic areas, hitching rails, landscape and shade tree plantings, day-use equestrian staging, and associated amenities, utilities, and infrastructure. The proposed project would also create a day-use staging area near Paso Picacho, including space for approximately 8 truck and trailer rigs with pull-through parking and amenities. Some trees may need to be removed or thinned. New trails and/or trail connections to existing trails, including the California Riding and Hiking Trail, will be developed as part of the project. Depending on site conditions, restrooms would be on septic and/or a contained vault system, and access to water and power may need to be developed as part of the project.

PROJECT LOCATION: The proposed project is located in San Diego County within Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, and involves two separate project sites. (see attached project location map):

The two sites are:

Merigan Ranch Area – Equestrian Campground, Day-use Facilities and Trailhead Staging, a former agricultural site located adjacent to the unincorporated community of Descanso, at the southern end of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. Access would be made from Viejas Blvd. off Highway 79.

Paso Picacho vicinity – Equestrian Staging, located on the east side of Hwy 79 across from the existing Paso Picacho use area, along the Cold Stream Trail.

POSSIBLE EFFECTS AND MITIGATIONS: In compliance with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15071 and 15126, and based on the existing resources and anticipated uses of the proposed facilities, potential environmental effects that will be addressed in the CEQA analysis include, but may not be limited to: biological resources (including sensitive species and wetlands), cultural resources (including archeological sites, historical resources, and traditional cultural properties), visual resources (aesthetics), air quality, noise, soils, hydrology, water quality, land use, utilities, traffic and recreation.

Avoidance conditions and mitigation measures will be developed to avoid or reduce potentially significant environmental effects.

Possible environmental effects that may be addressed at each of the sites are as follows:

Merigan Ranch

Cultural resources, land use, sensitive plants, visual resources (aesthetics), air quality, noise, soils, hydrology, water quality, utilities, recreation, and traffic

Paso Picacho

Cultural resources, land use, visual resources (aesthetics), sensitive plants, soils, hydrology, utilities, traffic, and recreation

INTENDED USE OF THE CEQA DOCUMENT: The CDPR intends to use the CEQA document for consideration of the environmental effects and mitigation measures when reviewing the proposed project for approval. The EIR will serve as CDPR's CEQA compliance document, as well as serve responsible agencies in the future for any subsequent discretionary actions under their jurisdiction required for implementation of the project.

Attachments: Project Location Map

PROJECT LOCATION MAP EQUESTRIAN FACILITIES

